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European Patent Office
Office européen des brevets

Publication number:

0 322 194

A1

-A 61L 27/00K4 + C08L 75/04

EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

Application number: 88312068.5

Int. Cl. A61L 27/00 , //A61F2/12

Date of filing: 20.12.88

-A 61L 27/00K4 + C08L 83/

Priority: 22.12.87 US 137871

Date of publication of application:
28.06.89 Bulletin 89/26

Designated Contracting States:
CH DE FR GB LI

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-A61F2/00

Implantable prosthetic device.

-A61F2/12

DOC 57 An implant (10) and coverings for an implant for used in the human body are disclosed. Coverings for implants are constructed to present a biocompatible surface to the body and to provide a textured surface which serves to disorganize scar tissue which forms around the implant. Filaments of expanded PTFEe are attached to a stretch fabric backing (16) in a loose weave configuration (14). Silicone molded in geometric patterns may be employed to present a textured surface. Compressive structures may be beneficially used on the surface of the implant or in the interior of the implant. Foam is one such compressive structure. Hexagonally shaped compressive cells containing fluid, gas, gel or foam are adapted to receive an insert which contains an outer biocompatible coating. A valve or port is provided to communicate between the cell and the body. Expansions means may be provided to expand the implant in a desired direction.

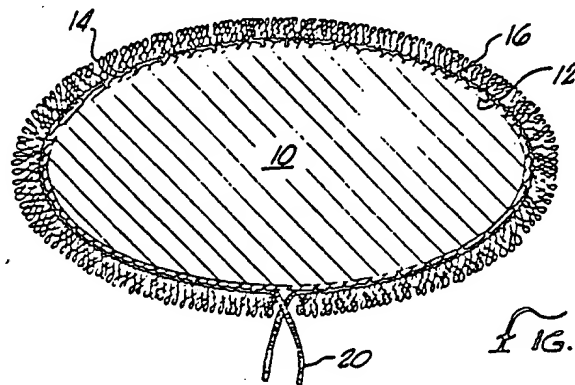


FIG. 1.

cellular - aqueous /ub.
covering

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Implantable prosthetic devices have been used in numerous locations in the body. The most common use has been for restoring or improving upon normal body contour or augmenting as well as reconstructing the female breast. The most common breast prosthesis is similar to that disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 3,293,663 to Cronin, in which there is a flexible elastomeric container, typically silicone, which is filled with a soft gel, typically silicone gel or a saline solution or a combination of both.

It is known that when a prosthetic device, including the Cronin type device, is implanted in the body, fibrous scar tissue encapsulates the device. This encapsulation leads to a problem of spherical scar contracture. As the scar tissue surrounds the prosthetic device it tends to contract, thereby causing the gel filled sac to assume a minimum volume configuration or spherical configuration. The problem of spherical scar contracture causes the breast implant to change from a shape approximating that of a natural human breast to that of a tennis ball.

Numerous solutions to the spherical scar contracture problem have been proposed. Friesch U.S. Patent No. 4,205,401 proposes the use of a relatively rigid restraining means which is contained within the fluid filled sac to thereby reduce the tendency of the tissue to distort the prosthesis into a sphere. Hamas U.S. Patent No. 4,264,990 discloses the use of a prosthesis which contains a flexible backing material containing at least one internal passageway or compartment into which a rigidifying material may be forced or emplaced. In this way the backing becomes inflexible in an attempt to prevent spherical encapsulation of the implant. Hamas U.S. Patent No. 4,531,244 discloses a prosthesis containing an outer envelope composed of a plurality of firm protruberances distributed substantially equally thereover. As scar contracture occurs, the relatively rigid protruberances are forced toward the gel filled sac, press on the gel filled sac, the gel flowing under pressure into the space between the protruberances.

The amount of spherical scar contracture which develops varies from patient to patient, and sometimes even differently respecting two implants in a single patient. The length of time which spherical scar contracture takes to develop also varies from patient to patient. Knowledge as to the etiologic factors behind spherical scar contracture is still developing. Some contributing factors are believed

to be the tendency of the human body to wall off foreign substances, the formation of blood clot, infection, the presence of small operating field contaminants such as talcum powder, silicone gel bleed through elastomer membrane and chronic irritation due to movement of the implant at the interface between the body tissues and implanted materials.

Other problems with breast implants include postimplantation asymmetry, breast ptosis and implant rupture. These problems, along with spherical scar contracture, can lead to patient discomfort, unacceptable deformation and shape of the breast and implant, loss of breast volume, gel dissemination and migration to distant points within the body, bleeding after surgical lysis of spherical contractures and even life-threatening systemic infection. In severe cases it is necessary to reoperate to remove or replace the prosthesis and to incise or excise the scar capsule or to remove blood clots which may result from closed lysis ("closed capsulotomy") of the contractures. The risks of reoperating include the risks of anesthesia, infection, additional scarring, other morbidity, and economic costs. When the results of the reconstructive or augmentative implantation are less than anticipated a loss of self esteem in the patient results.

Brauman U.S. Patent No. 4,648,880 discloses the use of a flexible container with a soft gel or fluid filling and an outer plastic or polymeric covering bonded to the flexible container and substantially encompassing the container. The outer covering is preferably made from Dacron or Teflon and has numerous pores or interstices as well as a rough textured external surface. The covering is believed to disperse or disorganize the forces of encapsulating scar tissue sufficient to avoid formation of a spherical capsular contracture. Brauman finds that the use of knitted polyester fiber such as Dacron, is found to be superior because it provides more elasticity and tissue ingrowth.

While it is believed that dispersion or disorganization of the scar tissue is beneficial in reducing spherical capsular contraction, it has proved extremely difficult to construct useful coverings out of Teflon. While Teflon is an exceptionally good biocompatible material, it has proved difficult to utilize as a covering material due to the difficulty of attachment to an enclosed elastomeric sac.

Other attempts have been made to limit spherical scar contracture, implant-breast deformation, or to deal with it once it has occurred. Approaches utilized previously include: (1) a normal saline barrier contained within its own silicone elastomer shell placed between the elastomer-encased gel

portion of the implant and the body tissue, (2) overfilling the prosthesis at the time of implantation and subsequently bleeding off excess fluid to allow for a softer implant, (3) underfilling the implant at the time of implantation and subsequently adding fluid to counteract the forces of scar contracture with perhaps later bleed off, (4) using steroids, either injected into the tissue surrounding the implant or into the interior of the implant or administered perorally in the post-operative period, (5) closed lysis of the contracture by applying pressure external to the breast sufficient to tear the scar capsule, (6) open lysis of the scar contracture through a second larger incision and more aggressive and extensive surgery to remove or weaken the scar capsule, (7) removal of the submammary implant and placing a different implant either into the submammary plane or submuscularly, (8) massage of the breast and applying external pressure in order to keep the capsule soft and pliable, and (9) massage of the breast in a circular fashion to maintain an oversized "pocket" significantly larger than the implant.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed to: (A) the use of a covering for a prosthesis which has high tissue ingrowth, biocompatibility, low reactivity and scar tissue formation and which disorganizes scar tissue that does form, thereby decreasing its ability to contract. Expanded PTFE (PTFEe) is used in the preferred embodiment of this invention. The PTFEe is configured for and may be attached to the elastomeric material such that the breast prosthesis is able to maintain a soft and natural suppleness, or it may remain entirely unattached as an enveloping sheetlike element. In one embodiment, a complex woven PTFEe filament or ribbon is sewn or affixed to a backing material, such as a Dacron or Nylon stretch weave embedded in silicone elastomer membrane. A drawstring closure or other device may be used to enclose the implant in the covering. Numerous coverings are possible in which a tube of PTFEe is modified by cutting to provide a suitable covering. One such example consists of cutting a tube in an annular configuration with a plurality of extending fingers. Multiple such elements may be affixed to the Dacron or Nylon stretch weave material cited above.

The present invention also is directed to: (B) the use of compressive structures which may be external and/or internal. Coverings may be provided which are relatively compressible in response to capsular contraction. In one embodiment the covering consists of a plurality of hexagonally

shaped cells which contain a biocompatible fluid which may be expelled from the cells under the pressure of capsular contraction. Compressive structures may also be provided within the implant itself. For example, gas or biocompatible fluid-filled elements or chambers within the implant may be compressed under the action of the contractile forces. Another embodiment utilizes biocompatible fluid filled foam elements as partially compressible structures either inside or outside the implant.

The present invention is further directed to: (C) providing variations in the compressibility and stability of the implant by utilizing a plurality of evaginations in the implant itself or by utilizing toroid structures which are affixed together or by enclosing deformable or mobile silicone elastomer structures within a containment including a fluid or gel matrix.

The present invention is further directed to: (D) providing for projection of a portion of the implant. Projection of the apex of the implant, for example, can be enhanced by filling special elements with fluid before, during or after surgical implantation.

Therefore, it is an object of this invention to: (1) provide an implantable prosthesis which resists the formation of spherical scar contracture, to (2) decrease the amount of scar tissue that forms at the implant/body interface, to (3) disperse and to disorganize the forces of scar contracture within the scar capsule that actually forms, to (4) accommodate to the net force of scar contracture that does occur, to (5) permit easy introduction and removal of the implant if removal should become necessary.

It is a further object of this invention to provide an implantable prosthesis which permits (6) postimplantation accommodation of total volume, either more or less than the volume at implantation.

It is a further object of this invention to provide an implantable mammary prosthesis which permits (7) postimplantation accommodation of implant projection which is defined as the distance from the chest wall pole of the implant to the opposite pole of the implant.

It is a further object of this invention to provide an implantable prosthesis which (8) prevents or greatly reduces gel bleed by virtue of inhibition of migration of gel through both the outermost elastomer membrane and PTFEe and other coverings.

It is a further object of this invention to provide for (9) a decreased rate of wound infections.

It is a further object of this invention to (10) greatly decrease the rate of reoperations for a variety of problems associated with breast prostheses by virtue of enhanced performance due to improved design.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The above objects and advantages of this invention will be more easily understood with reference to the following drawings and detailed description. In the drawings:

Figure 1 is a cross-sectional view of a single chambered implant and cover composed of a complex weave of expanded PTFE (PTFEe) filament or ribbon.

Figure 2 shows detail of a preferred embodiment of a cover composed of a complex PTFEe filament or ribbon weave affixed to a second stretch material such as Dacron or Nylon which may be impregnated with silicone elastomer.

Figure 3 shows a perspective view of a corona configuration made from a tube of PTFEe which may be sewn into onto a fabric such as silicone elastomer-impregnated Dacron or Nylon stretch fabric or otherwise affixed or used in other embodiments.

Figure 4 is a perspective view of an implant covering cut from a single sheet of PTFEe placed around a silicone elastomer shell.

Figures 5a and 5b show a cross section of PTFEe sheeting used as a cover for one embodiment of a silicone elastomer shell. Flat sheets with a central cutout are used between disc-like evaginations as well as for coverage of the top and bottom portions of the implant. The pieces are joined to each other by sewing or other suitable means. Two different basic constructions are shown with either a single or multiple sheets of PTFEe used between evaginations.

Figure 6 shows a top view of a PTFEe sheet for covering the implant.

Figure 7 shows a partial section of another embodiment of PTFEe sheet covering as a cascading series of folds around an implant, with the various sections affixed to a stretch weave material, for example Dacron.

Figure 11 shows a cover consisting of a molded silicone elastomer shell element with a pattern of nested hexagonal cells over the entire surface of the implant. Detail is shown. Other suitable geometric patterns may also be utilized.

Figure 13 shows geometric shaped sections of the PTFEe stretch weave affixed to stretch material such as Dacron or Nylon weave, for example, which may be affixed to a molded silicone elastomer shell which is impressed with a hexagonal pattern in relief. A great variety of other geometric patterns as well as PTFEe embodiments may be similarly used.

Figure 14 shows detail of a cover consisting of hexagonal pieces (for example) of PTFEe sheeting sewn to each other or otherwise affixed and

used to substantially cover the surface of the implant. The PTFEe may also be used whole (without cuts). Other geometric shapes and embodiments of surface coverings may be similarly used.

Figure 10 shows a perspective view of detail of PTFEe sheet material with a partial thickness pattern of simple cuts and/or channels which results in numerous individual villi of PTFEe and great irregularity of the surface of the material. Additional patterns of cuts or troughs may be made along any other axis as indicated, for example, by the arrows.

Figure 8 shows a cross-sectional view of a covering consisting of matted long silicone filaments fused partially to each other and also to a silicone elastomer shell and thereby serving as an anchoring substrate for PTFEe filament or ribbon. The PTFEe may be woven into or sewn or otherwise integrated or affixed to the silicone filaments by sewing or by other suitable means.

Figure 9 shows a cross-sectional view of a covering consisting of polyurethane foam, silicone foam or other suitable biocompatible foam serving to provide an anchoring substrate for PTFEe filament or ribbon. PTFEe filament or ribbon may be sewn partially through foam or completely through foam as well as backing consisting of stretch weave material such as Dacron which may be impregnated with silicone elastomer material, or may be otherwise integrated with or affixed to the foam. Materials serving the same functions and possessing characteristics similar to PTFEe may likewise be used.

Figure 16 shows a cross-sectional view of a plurality of hexagonal cells ("hexcels") attached to the surface of an implant. Also shown are bulbous inserts in position in receptacles in the hexcels. Each bulbous insert attaches a spray of PTFEe filament or ribbon to a hexcel.

Figure 15 is a top view of the hexcel arrangement of the cover.

Figure 17 shows a detailed cross-section of a cell from which biocompatible fluid may be expelled under the contractile force of the scar tissue capsule as well as a scheme for a "floating" fixation of solid PTFE discs or other suitable material or PTFEe filament or ribbon in special attachment receptacles.

Figures 20 and 21 show cross-sectional views of a pressure accommodation element consisting of a polyurethane or other biocompatible foam cover enveloping substantially all or part of a gel-filled or other-configured implant. The foam is itself covered with a perforated silicone elastomer or PTFEe membrane or other suitable material. The cover is perforated or has other fluid conducting structures which permit ingress and egress of

normal saline or body fluids. The foam is filled with normal saline or other biocompatible fluid at implantation of the prosthesis.

Figure 19 shows a pressure accommodation element consisting of a polyurethane or other biocompatible foam contained substantially within an enveloping chamber of silicone gel or normal saline or other biocompatible fluid or other structural element. The pressure accommodation element is affixed to the wall of the outer chamber. The wall is perforated or has other means for allowing transfer of biocompatible fluids in and out of the foam-filled element. These elements may be single or multiple in a given implant design.

Figure 18 shows a preferred embodiment of a pressure accommodation element consisting of a gas-filled element with a plurality of hyperevaginations in disc-like configuration. This element is contained within a perforated elastomer shell which serves to fixate and to locate the element in apposition to a desired location on the wall of an internal fluid compartment of the implant. This element when configured in the embodiment illustrated also serves to provide for projection of the apex of the implant when certain wall thicknesses and appropriately stretchable silicone elastomer is utilized.

Figure 22 is a cross-sectional view of an implant which shows a plurality of the pressure accommodation elements described in Figure 18 inside a gel or saline-filled chamber which is itself located outside a larger compartment of gel or normal saline or other-configured portion of an implant. These pressure accommodation elements may be affixed to the outer and/or inner elastomer shell(s) or may be permitted to float freely within the saline or gel matrix.

Figure 23 is a cross-sectional view of an implant containing a plurality of gas and/or fluid containing compressible members within the implant which also contains fluid or gel. Each typical pressure-accommodation element is a small version of the element described in Figure 18. Detail is shown in Figure 24.

Figure 30 shows a cross-sectional view of a silicone elastomer implant consisting of a series of hollow or solid discoid evaginations of different diameters whose overall configuration is that of a standard mammary prosthesis. Also shown is a special internal projection element at the apex with a stalk affixed to the base of the implant. Also shown is an outermost silicone elastomer membrane which serves to provide for smooth contouring of the implant.

Figure 27 shows a cross-section of an implant consisting of a stack of either hollow or solid toroid elements held in apposition by a projection element that traverses the central opening of each

toroid element and which by virtue of the enlarged top and bottom portions serves to maintain all elements of the implant in intimate contact. The apical portion of the projection element is an expansion chamber which may be filled through the bottom or top piece. The surfaces of the toroid elements are protected by a covering of PTFE sheets which are sewn or otherwise affixed to each other at the greater periphery. The tube is shown covered by tubular PTFE to minimize friction. Figure 29 shows enlarged detail of Figure 27. Figure 28 is section indicated in Figure 27.

Figure 25 shows a cross-section of a telescoping projection element which may be configured as the mammary prosthesis proper or may be configured as a projection element of a more complex implant. Toroid elements may be solid or fluid-filled and serve to restrict horizontal displacement of the shell, yet permit vertical expansion. The apical portion of the expansion chamber is made thin in order to permit preferential dilatation of this region.

Figure 26 shows detail of the expansion chamber and solid toroid structures as well as the PTFE sheets which are interposed between.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

The implant coverings usable in connection with this invention may be manufactured from any material which promotes limited tissue ingrowth into the material, and has a high biocompatibility and low reactivity and disorganizes scar tissue at the implant/body interface. Expanded PTFE (PTFEe) is a preferred material for this invention. PTFEe is sold under the tradename Gortex and is readily available. The expanded ultrastructure of this material is associated with a high degree of ultramicroporosity which invites tissue ingrowth. The material is approximately 50% air by volume. It is extremely strong yet soft, smooth, pliable, compressible and stretchable. Gortex is readily available in sheet form of various thicknesses, as round filaments of various diameters, and as tubes of various diameters and wall thicknesses. PTFEe sheeting stretches to a limited extent along a given axis, however resists stretching along all axes simultaneously. It is extremely biocompatible having been used in more than 700,000 clinical uses with no confirmed cases of material rejection. PTFEe is incorporated into surrounding tissue and is minimally encapsulated by collagen. The material is extremely strong and thereby would reduce the need for reoperation for material fatigue. It resists

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flexural fatigue by acting like a chain when bending forces are applied. However, it is easily cut by a knife or by using die cutting techniques. It lends itself well to machine manufacturing methods including stitching.

Figure 1 shows one embodiment of an implant cover using PTFEe filament or ribbon in a complex expandable weave pattern. The implant 10 has an outer elastomer membrane surface 12 which is covered by the complex PTFEe weave 14. PTFEe filament or ribbon may be woven into a complex stretch weave in the form of a blind sock so as to permit complete envelopment of the implant 10. The weave 14 may be attached to a backing 16, such as a Dacron or Nylon stretch weave embedded in silicone elastomer by sewing or other means. The sock thus formed may be held around the implant 10 by means of a drawstring closure 20 or other suitable means. The sock may be either attached to the exterior surface 12 of the implant, as for example with an adhesive, or may be unattached. If desirable, multiple layers of PTFEe stretch weave socks may be used to envelop the implant 10. Figure 2 shows detail of fixation of PTFEe filament or ribbon to stretch fabric by sewing through the PTFEe filament or ribbon. The sewing filament 22 is used to affix the weave 14 to the backing 16. As shown in Figure 8 and Figure 9, other coverings can be made utilizing silicone elastomer filaments and/or foam as anchoring substrates for PTFEe filament or ribbon. The silicone filaments 15 are matted and may be affixed to backing 16 or left entirely unattached to anything other than PTFEe filament or ribbon 14. Attachment means may be substantially similar to those indicated in Figure 2. Foam 17 may be affixed to backing 16 by suitable means or may be left entirely unattached to anything other than PTFEe filament or ribbon 14.

Tubular PTFEe material such as vascular graft material may be cut into a corona configuration as shown in Figure 3. The corona configuration consists of an unsevered annular region 30 with a plurality of fingers or projections 32 extending from the annular region 30. Two such corona configurations may be formed back to back with the two annular bases 30 being attached in a small region 34. These corona may then be sewn together or to an intermediate backing of stretch Dacron or Nylon fabric or other suitable material in order to form a sock similar to that shown for the complex stretch weave pattern of Figure 1, or otherwise affixed to the backing or used in other embodiments. Alternatively, the corona structures may be attached directly to the exterior surface or other covering of the implant by other means.

A covering for an implant may be constructed substantially of a single sheet of PTFEe as shown

for example in Figure 4. A single sheet of PTFEe 40 is cut so as to permit it to be wrapped around the implant 10. Projectile tongues 42 may be fastened together or may be attached to separate PTFEe sheets 44 and 46 which serve as cap and bottom pieces. Appropriate cuts 48 are made in the single PTFEe sheet 40 to permit stretching of the sheet in various directions.

It will be appreciated that the PTFEe sheet covering of the implant may be composed of a large number of shapes and sizes of elements. In addition to those embodiments disclosed in detail above, it is possible to use multiple overriding flat sheets sewn to conform to the shape of the implant, overriding or abutting sheets of various geometric shapes as shown in Figure 13, with stress-relieving patterns of cuts, fan folded or pleated sheets in a cascading pattern to conform to the implant shape, as shown in Figure 7, or corrugated or pleated sheets as marginal covering over portions of or over the entirety of the implant. Other embodiments include sewing sheets of PTFEe to a backing material made of a stretch material, silicone elastomer sheet or foam material which may be wrapped around the implant or attached to the implant by other suitable means, or by interposing sheets of PTFEe between elements of the implant which may be attached to each other by suitable means as shown in Figures 5a, 5b, 6, 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29. Other coverings consistent with the objectives of this invention may be similarly used.

The covering for the implant may be composed of a stack of annular shaped PTFEe sheets as shown, for example, in Figure 6. Annular sheets of PTFEe 50 may be sewn together or suitably attached at their outer edge 52 and/or at their inner edge 54. When so attached, an interior space 56 defines a plurality of evaginations which are filled by a similarly shaped implant. Two different basic constructions of this covering are shown. Figure 5a. shows an embodiment with two sheets between evaginations. Figure 5b. shows an embodiment with one sheet between evaginations.

As in Figures 11, 12, 13, and 14, a textured molded covering 58 may be provided made of silicone elastomer or other suitable materials which serves to limit the force of scar contracture around the implant by disorganizing the scar tissue itself and also by compartmentalizing blood clot and collagen around the implant.

The "nested hexcel" structural pattern of Figures 11 and 12 is a preferred embodiment. All such hexcels are attached to or part of the same base which is a covering element of the implant. The textured covering 58 may form the entirety or only a portion of the covering of the implant. The hexcel with the largest perimeter 60 in this configuration is also the tallest and delimits hexagonal pools of

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biologic materials and tissues at the interface between the implant and the body cavity. As scar tissue forms it is forced into concentric, nested rings of scar tissue which do not communicate freely and thus do not contribute to an integral circumferential scar capsule.

It will be appreciated that the height of these nested hexcel structures may be varied. Also the number, diameter or perimeter of the hexcel structures as well as their wall thickness and shapes and characteristics may be varied. It will be further appreciated that a great number of geometric patterns may be utilized for the purposes described above, including square and circular patterns.

It will be appreciated also that the molded textured covering 58 above may be configured to accept a geometric shaped portion of any of the other coverings described herein. A piece of the woven PTFEe stretch weave cover 62, as an example, is sewn or otherwise suitably affixed to the molded covering 58.

The covering of the implant may also comprise a plurality of silicone elastomer cells. As shown in Figures 15, 16, and 17, in the preferred embodiment, hexagonally shaped cells ("hexcels") 70 may be used. Other configurations would also work well. A plurality of hexcels 70 may be attached to the exterior surface 72 of the implant by silicone adhesive bonding 74 or other suitable means or may be incorporated into a separate covering element such as foam, for example. The hexcels 70 are arranged over the surface 72 of the implant in a mosaic arrangement. The hexcels 70 may be abutting or they may be spaced apart by as far as five millimeters. If necessary, the space between hexcels 70 may be filled with silicone adhesive, foam or other suitable material.

13.17
The hexcel 70 is composed of an exterior wall 76 and an internal socket 78. A space 80 is defined between the exterior wall 76 and the internal socket 78. The space 80 may be filled with normal saline or other biocompatible fluid. The space 80 may in addition be filled with foam, or silicone elastomer filaments or other materials which possess the requisite characteristic of offering limited resistance to compression external to the hexcel as well as the characteristics of a great amount of flexibility and deformability. The wall 76 is constructed to offer limited resistance to deformation by varying the wall thickness. An insert 80 is placed in socket 78. As shown in detail in Figure 17, the insert 82 is composed of an enlarged section 84, strands of PTFEe filament or ribbon 86, a clip 88 and a surface piece 90. The enlarged section 84 is received by the socket 78 and held in place thereby. In this embodiment a slight amount of rotational and flexural movement on the part of the insert 82 is permitted. The clip 88 is preferably a radiolucent

plastic vascular clip crimped to hold the PTFEe filaments or ribbons 86 within the enlarged molded section 84. The surface disc 90 is made of solid PTFE or PTFEe sheeting or other suitable material and may be used to stabilize the hexcel structure. It will be appreciated that the PTFEe material may be in any number of forms, for example, in the filament or ribbon form as shown herein, or in any other format provided that it can be retained by the hexcel.

Relief holes 92 may be provided in the hexcel 70 to make the hexcel more compressible. In the event of capsular contracture the outer surfaces of the hexcel 70 will be compressed towards the implant surface 72 thereby increasing the pressure of materials contained within the space 80. If the pressure within the space 80 exceeds the pressure outside the relief hole 92, biocompatible fluid such as normal saline will be injected into the body at a rate equal to the contracture rate, thereby decreasing the overall volume of the implant slightly and yet retaining implant suppleness, softness and shape.

An interior compressive structure may be provided within the implant as shown in Figure 18. The implant may contain multiple enveloping membranes 94 as well as multiple enveloping compartments 96, any one of which may contain gel or normal saline or other biocompatible fluid, foam or other suitable material. An internal compressive structure 100 may be provided which is made of silicone elastomer and which may be configured to incorporate a plurality of evaginations 102, which compressive structure 100 contains a gas in the innermost chamber 98. A special coating consisting of polysiloxane or other appropriate material may be applied to prevent gas diffusion through the wall of the evaginated structure 102. Normal saline, gel or other suitable material is used in spaces 96 to transmit pressure between fluid or gel-filled compartments 96, and elastomer evaginations 102. The fluid passes through the perforations 106. The various enveloping membranes 94 may be affixed to each other in a region, for example 104, if desired.

Another preferred embodiment is that of utilizing a plurality of the compressive structures shown in Figure 18 inside a gel-filled or normal saline-filled implant along with a larger compartment of gel or normal saline or other-configured portion of an implant.

Multiple enveloping compartments may be provided that can be serially decompressed. Radiopaque and independently targetable regions of such compartments may be provided in order to permit the outermost compartment then still containing fluid to be selected for decompression by insertion of a hollow needle or other suitable device. Alternatively, pressure sensitive valves may

be provided to permit spontaneous decompression without surgical intervention.

A plurality of pressure accommodation elements 100 may be provided as described in Figure 22. These elements are situated in a compartment 108 which is also filled with silicone gel or normal saline or other suitable fluid and the compartment 108 may be located outside of or surrounding a separate compartment of gel or normal saline or other portion of an implant. These pressure accommodation elements may be affixed to the outermost elastomer shell 110 or to the inner elastomer membrane 112 or both or may be permitted to float freely within the fluid or gel inside the compartment 108. Figure 24 shows detail of the compression structure 100. One or more vent holes 106 may be employed for equilibration of pressures.

As described in Figure 23, another preferred embodiment is that of an implant containing a plurality of gas and/or fluid and/or foam containing compressible members within the implant which also contains fluid or gel. Each typical pressure-accommodating element may be a small version of the element described in Figure 18.

Other compressive structures as shown in Figures 19, 20 and 21 may be provided which incorporate polyurethane or other biocompatible foam 114 filled with normal saline and which may be placed substantially around or within another separate compartment 116 filled with silicone gel or normal saline or other biocompatible fluid. Each such fluid-filled foam element accommodates to compression external to the implant by bleeding off biocompatible fluid sufficient to equal such compression via a number of perforations or tubes between the foam-filled space and the space surrounding the implant. The foam-filled space may in addition contain semi-compressive sac-like structures or a trabecular network of silicone elastomer walls or filaments which may provide additional resistance to compression of the foam and thereby limit the collapse of the space in compartment 116. The fluid that is drained off is absorbed by the body. It will be appreciated that there may be a plurality of such small fluid-filled foam elements comprising yet another configuration of this embodiment. Figure 21 shows the compartment 116 attached to the outer cover of the implant, as an example.

The use of a plurality of fluid-filled or gas-filled or solid discoid elements, connected to each other at the central constriction (narrow waist), such as shown and described in connection with Figures 5a, 5b, and 30, and expandable discoid evaginations as shown and described in connection with Figures 25 and 27, are preferred embodiments. These discoid elements may have varying sizes and shapes. The diameter of each disc or evagina-

tion may be set as needed. In one preferred embodiment as shown for example in Figure 30, a relatively large distance will separate the inside portions 124 of the evaginations 120 closest to the chest wall. This space will decrease as the opposite pole of the implant is approached. In this way, greater stability and axial projection of the implant may be achieved. Additional stabilization may be achieved by changing the shape of the central tube 126. Attachment of the projection element 128 is by means of a flared portion 130 of the tube 126 or by other suitable means. If desired, an expandable region may be included which comprises a relatively more distensible and thin walled section of the exterior surface 132 of the implant as well as a chamber 134 in which normal saline or other biocompatible fluid may be used to provide pressure to expand the thin walled region of the exterior membrane 132 of the implant. It will be appreciated that the implant may be covered with any of the coverings described herein.

Figures 27, 28, and 29 show the use of a plurality of fluid-filled or solid toroid-shaped elements, maintained in apposition by a projection element with a tubal element 156 that traverses the central opening of each element. This is a preferred embodiment of the invention. The enlarged top 140 and bottom 142 portions serve to maintain all elements of the implant in intimate contact. Either the top or bottom portion or other portions of the projection element may serve as an expansion chamber 148 which may be filled through either the bottom or top piece or both. The surfaces of the toroid elements 144 are protected by a covering of PTFEe sheeting 146 which serves to reduce friction at the interfaces 150 as the implant is manipulated. The PTFEe sheets are affixed to each other by suitable means at the greater periphery 152, the lesser periphery 154, or both. Likewise the tubal element 156 is covered by tubular PTFEe 158 to reduce friction. It will be appreciated that the individual sub-elements of this embodiment may be configured in a great variety of ways. It will also be appreciated that any portion of or the entirety of the implant may be covered by any of the coverings described herein.

Though the invention has been described with respect to specific preferred embodiments, many variations and modifications will become apparent to those skilled in the art. It is therefore the intention and expectation that the appended claims be interpreted as broadly as possible in view of the prior art in order to include all such variations and modifications.

Claims

1. A covering for an implant comprising, an exterior material which is expandable and which substantially covers the implant, and a stretch fabric backing to which the exterior material is attached.

2. The covering of Claim 1 wherein the exterior material is expanded PTFEe.

3. The covering of Claim 1 wherein the exterior material is biocompatible foam.

4. The covering of Claim 1 wherein the exterior material is polyurethane foam.

5. The covering of Claim 1 wherein the exterior material is silicone foam.

6. The covering of Claim 1 wherein the exterior material is a silicone elastomer sheet of molding impressed with a geometric pattern.

7. The covering of Claim 1 wherein the exterior material is PTFEe tubes which have been slit lengthwise.

8. The covering of Claim 1 wherein the exterior material is a tube of PTFEe cut in a corona configuration.

9. The covering of Claim 1 wherein the exterior material is PTFEe sheeting.

10. The covering of claim 9 wherein the PTFEe sheeting consists of at least a top piece, a bottom piece and a third sheet.

11. The covering of claim 9 wherein the PTFEe sheeting is cut villous PTFEe sheeting.

12. The covering of Claim 1 wherein the exterior material are PTFEe filaments.

13. The covering of Claim 1 wherein the stretch fabric backing is a dacron weave.

14. The covering of Claim 1 wherein the stretch fabric backing is a nylon weave.

15. The covering of Claim 1 further comprising means to attach the covering to the implant.

16. The covering of claim 1 further including a drawstring closure.

17. In an implantable prosthetic device for use in the human body, the improvement comprising: a pressure adaptive element which is capable of automatically changing volume under pressure.

18. The implantable prosthetic device of Claim 17 wherein the pressure adaptive element includes a sponge material.

19. The implantable prosthetic device of Claim 17 wherein the pressure adaptive element includes the covering of the implant.

20. The implantable prosthetic device of Claim 17 wherein the pressure adaptive element is included within the implant.

21. The implantable prosthetic device of Claim 17 wherein the pressure adaptive element consists of a plurality of individual spheres of at least two sizes.

22. A covering for an implantable prosthetic device for use in the human body comprising: one or more pressure sensitive structures,

each such pressure sensitive structure enclosing a volume for containing a fluid, a gas or a combination of both, and a means for communication between the volume of the pressure sensitive structure and the human body, and

an atraumatic covering for at least that portion of the pressure sensitive structure which interfaces with the human body.

23. The covering of Claim 22 in which the pressure sensitive structure is in the shape of a hexagonal cell.

24. The covering of Claim 22 in which the pressure sensitive structure is in the shape of a sphere.

25. The covering of Claim 22 in which the pressure sensitive structure includes a plurality of spheres which contain compressive structures with a high surface to volume ratio.

26. The covering of Claim 22 in which the pressure sensitive structure is in the shape of a hyper-evaginated hollow element, which structure is filled with a gas, or fluid, or a combination thereof.

27. The covering of Claim 22 in which the means to communicate between the volume of the pressure sensitive structure and the human body is a tube.

28. The covering of Claim 22 in which the means to communicate between the volume of the pressure sensitive structure and the human body is a pressure sensitive valve.

29. An implant for use in the human body comprising: an inner sac including one or more of the following: gel, foam, solid, fluid or gas,

a foam covering for the inner sac and an outer covering which permits communication between the foam covering and the human body.

30. The implant of claim 29 wherein the outer covering is made of silicone elastomer.

31. The implant of claim 29 wherein the outer covering is made of PTFEe.

32. An attachment mechanism for a covering to an implant for the human body comprising, a receptacle containing an inlet to receive and retain a bulbous projection of an insert.

an insert with a neck terminating in a bulbous projection adapted to be received by the receptacle, and

a biocompatible material covering for said insert.

33. An implantable prosthetic device for use in the human body comprising, an implant containing gel or fluid, and a compressive structure included within the implant which has a relatively high surface to volume ratio.

34. The implantable prosthetic device of Claim 33 in which the compressive structure is a hyperevaginated hollow structure filled with a gas or fluid.

35. An implant for use in the human body comprising,

a plurality of gel filled disks,

a first and second substantially flat PTFEe sheet each having an outer periphery and an inner periphery for each of said gel filled disks, and means to join the first and second substantially flat PTFEe sheets at their outer periphery.

36. The implant of Claim 35 wherein the gel filled disks are joined together at their center portions.

37. The implant of Claim 35 wherein the gel filled disks contain a hole through which a retaining member passes.

38. The implant of Claim 35 wherein the means to join the first and second substantially flat sheets at their outer periphery is sewing.

39. The implant of Claim 35 wherein the inner periphery of the substantially flat PTFEe sheet are attached to the adjoining flat PTFEe sheet.

40. An implant for use in the human body comprising:

one or more PTFEe covered tubes containing silicon gel, normal saline, gas or any combination thereof, and

a barrier to contain said tubes in a selected region of the body, said barrier containing means to communicate from the inside of the barrier to the body.

41. An implant for use in the human body, the improvement comprising:

addition of an expandable chamber within the implant which may be filled with fluid or gas to cause dilation of a portion of the implant.

42. The implant of Claim 41 wherein the expandable chamber has a thinner wall relative to the rest of the chamber in the region where dilation is to occur.

43. The implant of Claim 41 wherein the expandable chamber permits telescopic projection of the chamber.

44. An implant for use in the human body comprising,

a plurality of disks containing an inner aperture,

an expandable chamber which passes through the inner apertures of said disks,

said expandable chamber having a relatively thin walled section in the region where projection of the implant is desired,

a thick walled base element,

flat PTFEe sheets for covering each of said gel filled disks, and

an expandable PTFEe covering above the expandable chamber.

45. An implant for use in the human body comprising, a hyperevaginated chamber, the hyperevaginated chamber having an apical portion capable of projection.

a biocompatible coating covering all portions of the implant which are exposed to the human body.

46. The implant of claim 45 wherein the biocompatible coating consists of one or more sheets of PTFEe.

47. An improved covering for an implant for use in the human body, the improvement comprising the use of one of more elongated projection from the surface of the covering which extend substantially perpendicularly from the surface of the covering and have a length which is greater than the height or width of the projection.

48. A covering for an implant comprising,

a silicone elastomer having an outer surface shaped to have a plurality of polygonal shaped regions disposed thereon, each polygonal shaped region having an outer wall which projects substantially perpendicularly to the surface of the covering to a given height, and one or more polygonal shaped regions disposed within the outer wall and projecting substantially perpendicularly to the surface of the covering.

49. The covering of claim 48 wherein the polygonal shaped region is a hexagon.

50. The covering of claim 48 wherein the polygonal shaped region is a square.

51. The covering of claim 48 wherein the polygonal shaped region is substantially a circle.

52. The covering of claim 48 wherein each polygonal shaped region which is disposed inwardly of a polygonal shaped region is of a lesser height than those regions disposed around it.

53. A covering for an implant for use in the human body comprising,

a plurality of polygonal shaped PTFEe cups, each cup having a bottom and sides,

each of the PTFEe cups being sewn to its nearest neighbor PTFEe cups, and

a biocompatible covering disposed on the bottom of the PTFEe cups.

54. The covering for an implant of claim 53 wherein the biocompatible covering disposed on the bottom of the PTFEe cups includes a weave of PTFEe filaments.

55. A covering for an implant for use in the human body comprising,

a silicone elastomer base,

a fabric embedded within the base,

a biocompatible foam attached to the base, and

PTFEe filament sewn into to the foam.

56. The covering for an implant of claim 55 wherein the PTFEe filament is sewn into the foam but not the fabric.

57. The covering for an implant of claim 55 wherein the PTFEe filament is sewn into the fabric.

58. The covering for an implant of claim 55 wherein the fabric is a knitted fabric.

59. The covering for an implant of claim 55 wherein the fabric is dacron. 5

60. The covering for an implant of claim 55 wherein the fabric is nylon.

61. A covering for an implant for use in the human body comprising a silicone elastomer having an outer surface shaped to have a repetitive geometric pattern in bold relief. 10

62. A covering for an implant for use in the human body comprising:

a silicone elastomer base. 15

a silicone elastomer filament attached to the base, a biocompatible material attached to the silicone elastomer filament sufficient to cover silicone elastomer which is exposed to the body.

63. The covering of claim 62 wherein the biocompatible material is PTFEe filament. 20

64. The covering of claim 62 wherein the biocompatible material is PTFEe sheeting.

65. A covering for an implant for use in the human body comprising a silicone elastomer coating which is exposed to the body and which contains a plurality of open cells at the surface of the silicone elastomer coating. 25

66. A method for manufacturing an implant for use in the human body comprising: molding or forming a silicone elastomer foam material which contains a plurality of cells containing a gas, and 30

abrading or cutting the surface of the foam material to expose some or all of the cells, thereby providing open cells on the surface of the foam. 35

67. The covering of Claim 1 wherein the exterior material is silicone elastomer.

68. An implant for use in the human body comprising: 40

a first foam element,

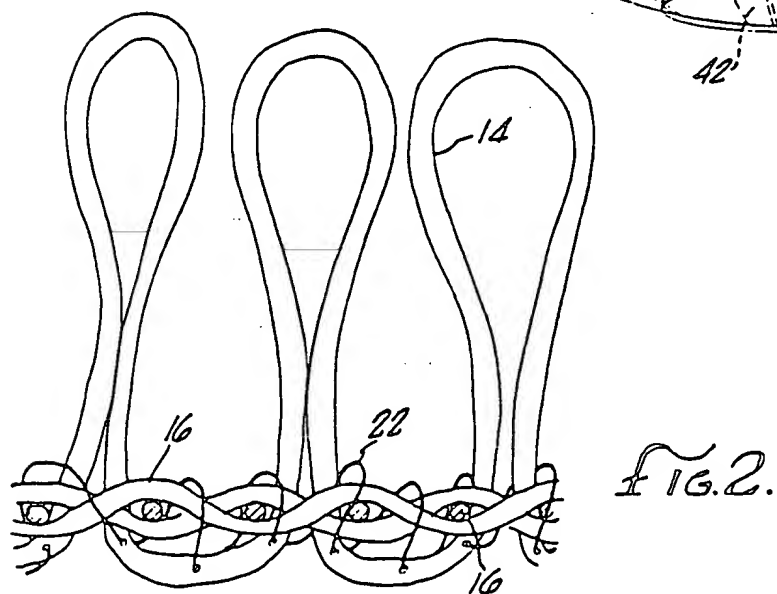
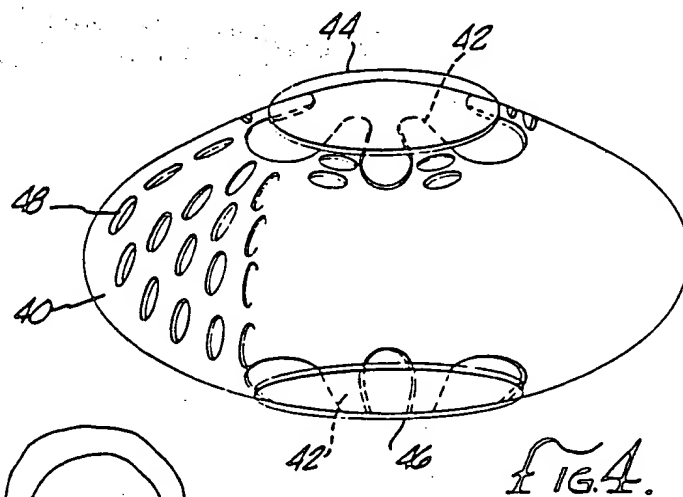
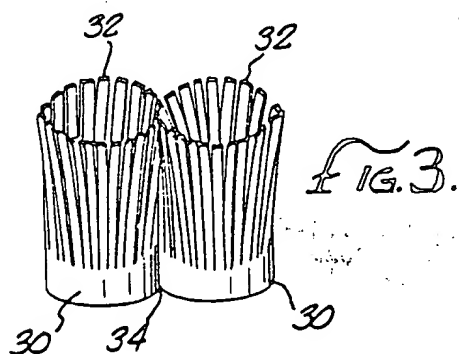
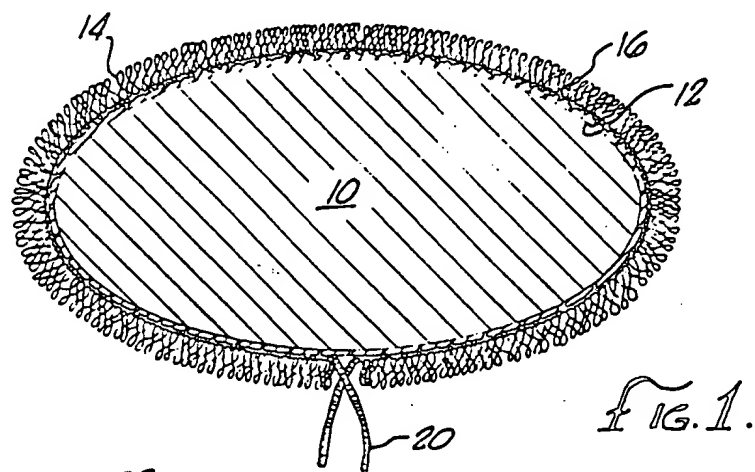
a second foam element which is contained within the first foam element, and

a membrane to separate the first foam element and the second foam element. 45

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FIG. 5a.

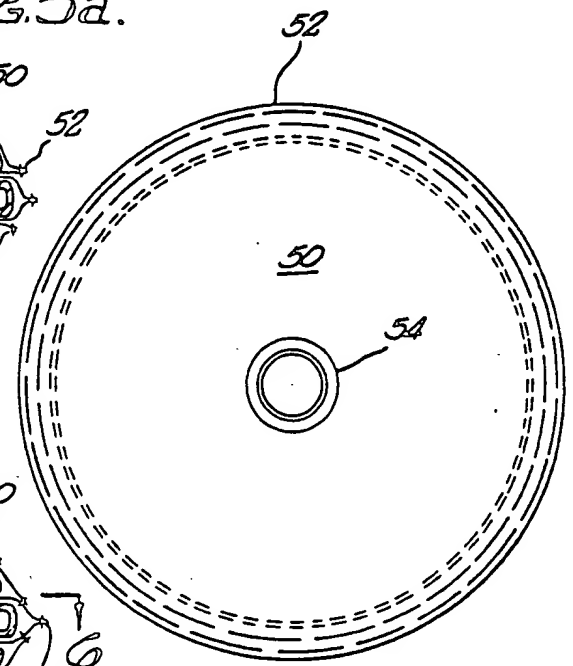
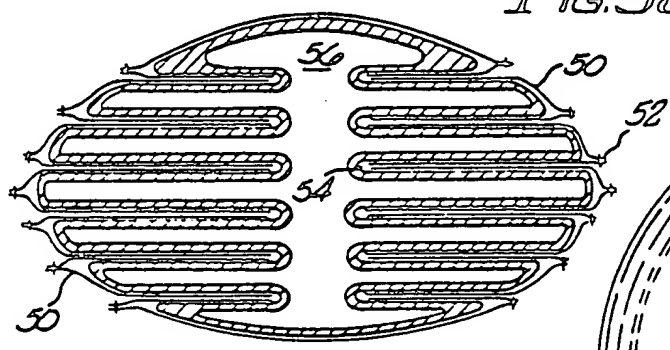


FIG. 6.

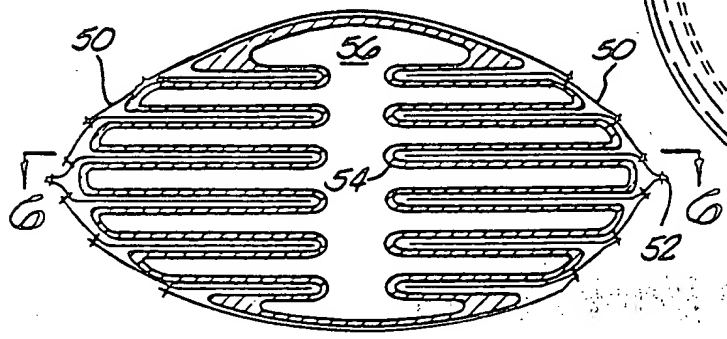


FIG. 5b.

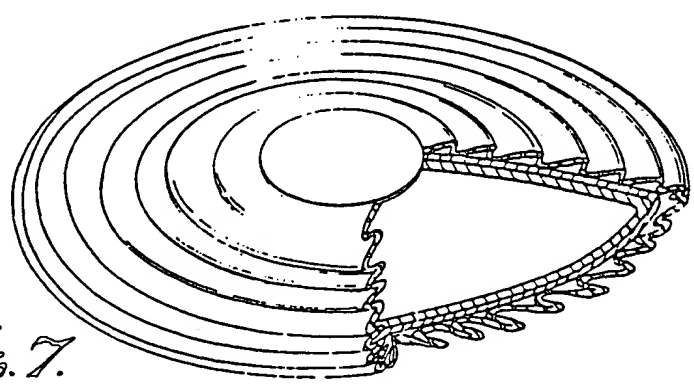


FIG. 7.

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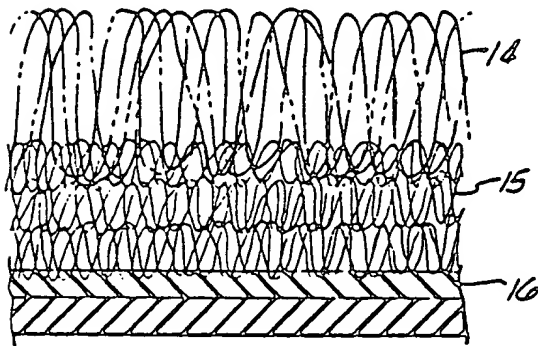


FIG. 8.

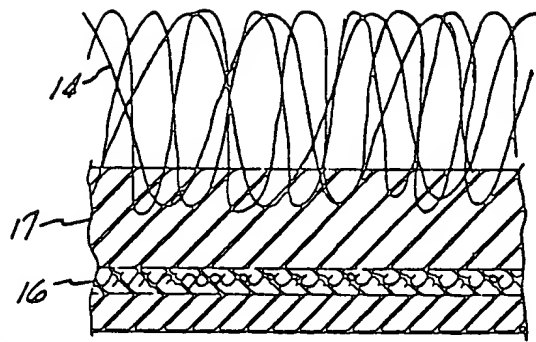


FIG. 9.

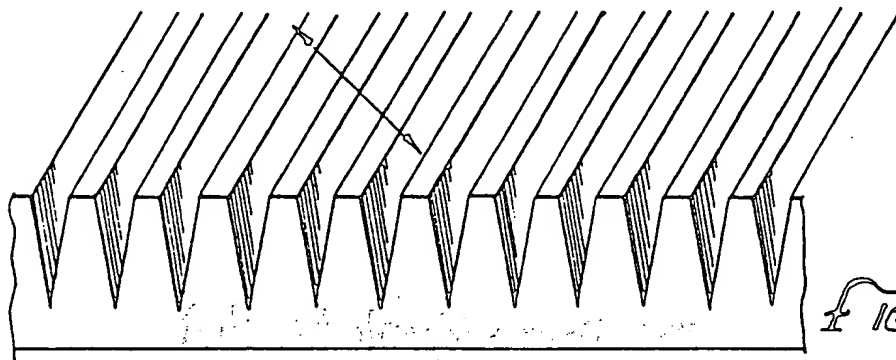


FIG. 10.

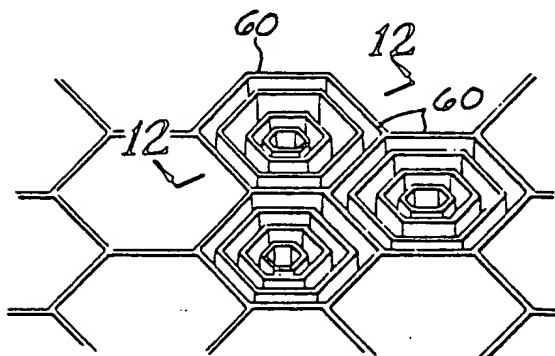


FIG. 11.

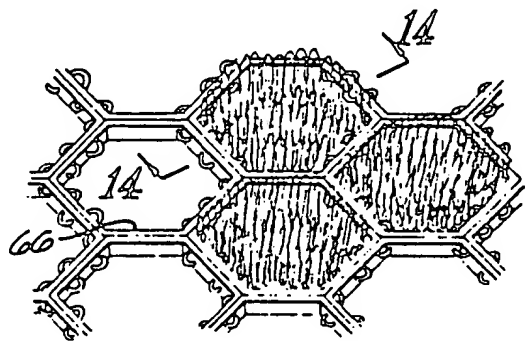


FIG. 13.

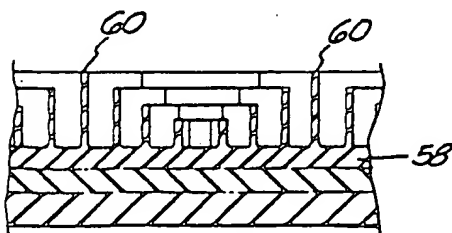


FIG. 12.

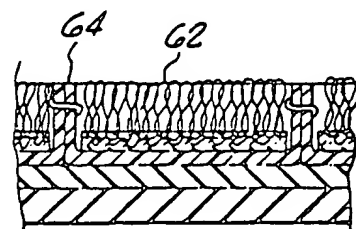
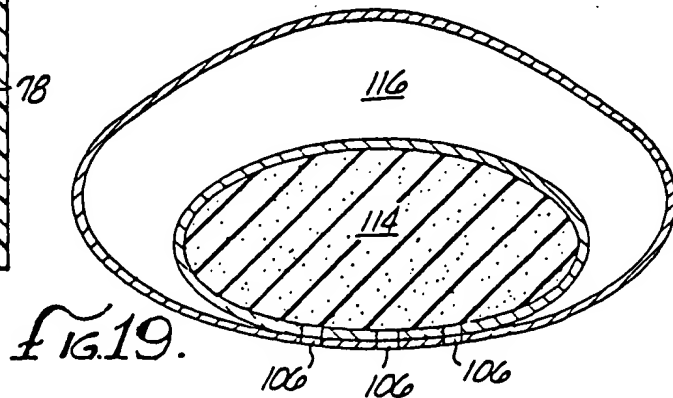
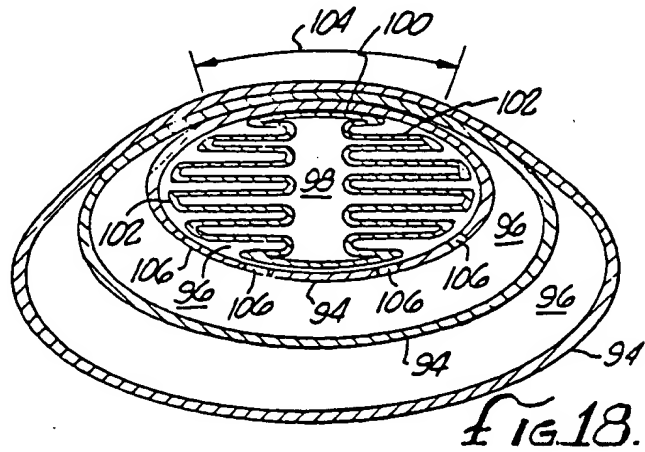
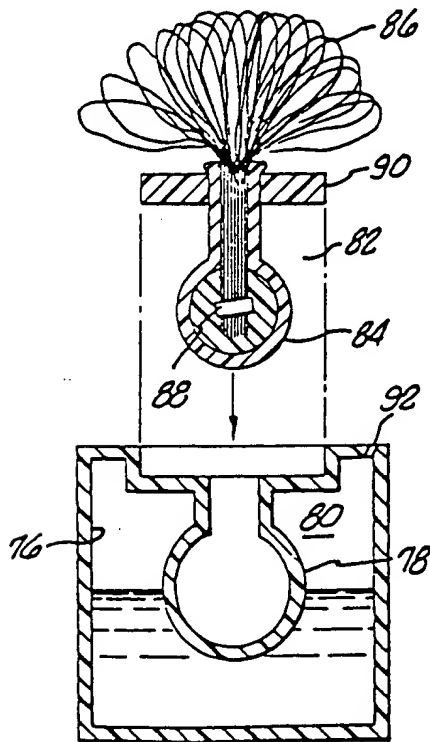
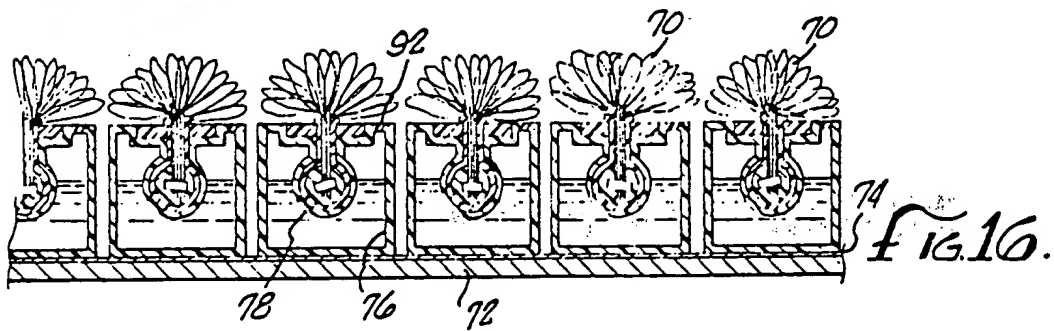
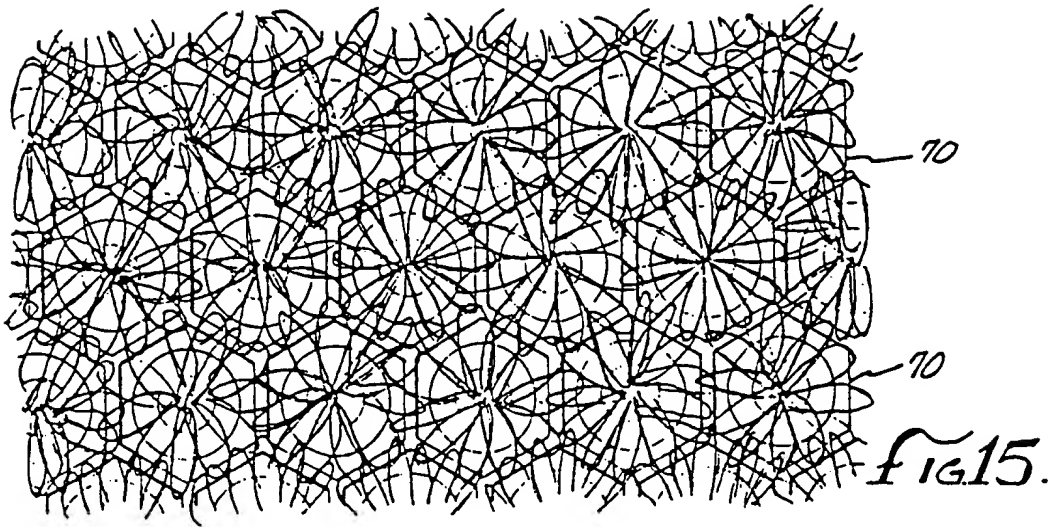


FIG. 14.

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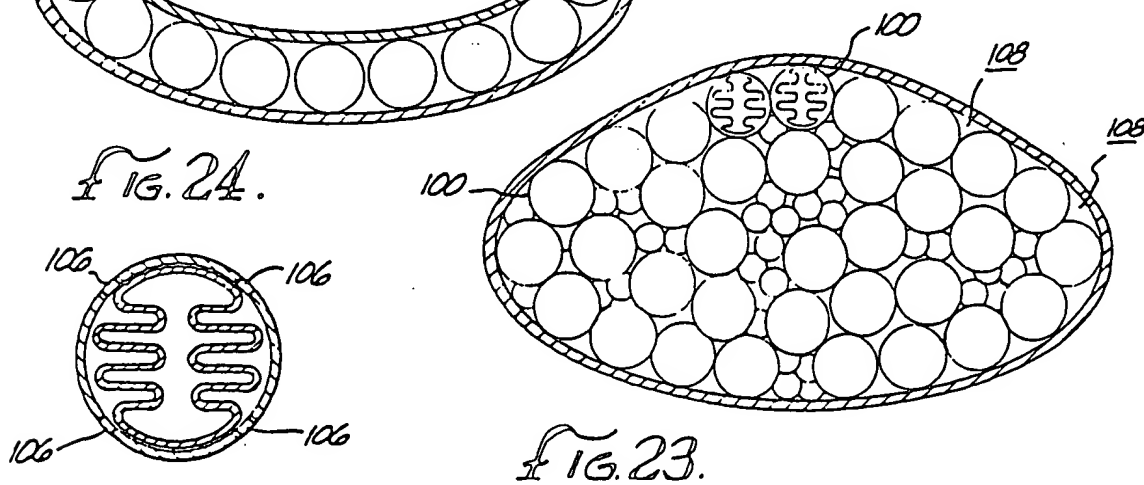
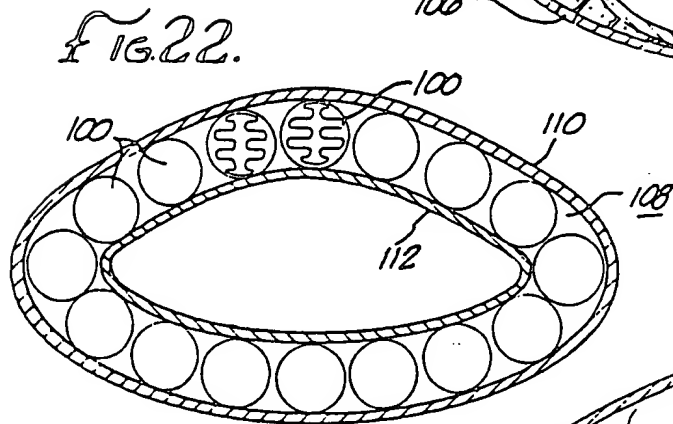
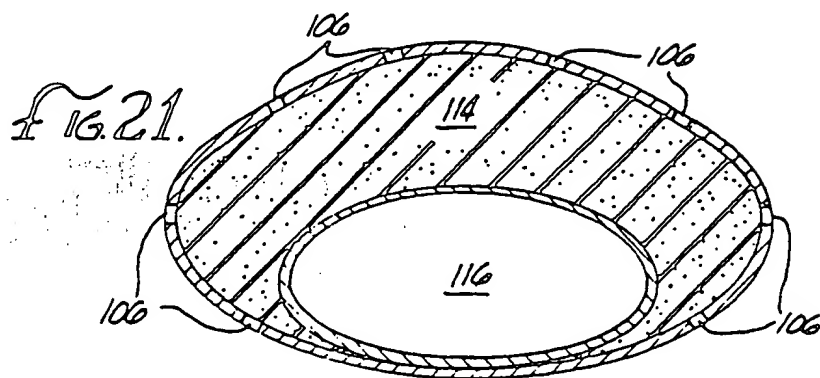
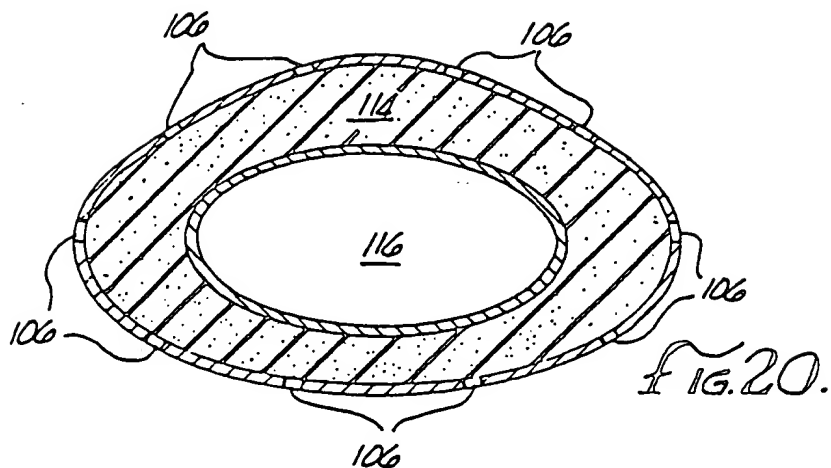


FIG. 24.

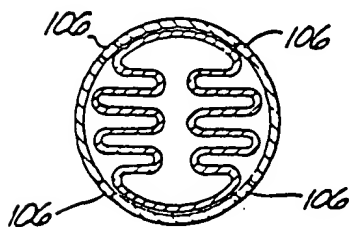
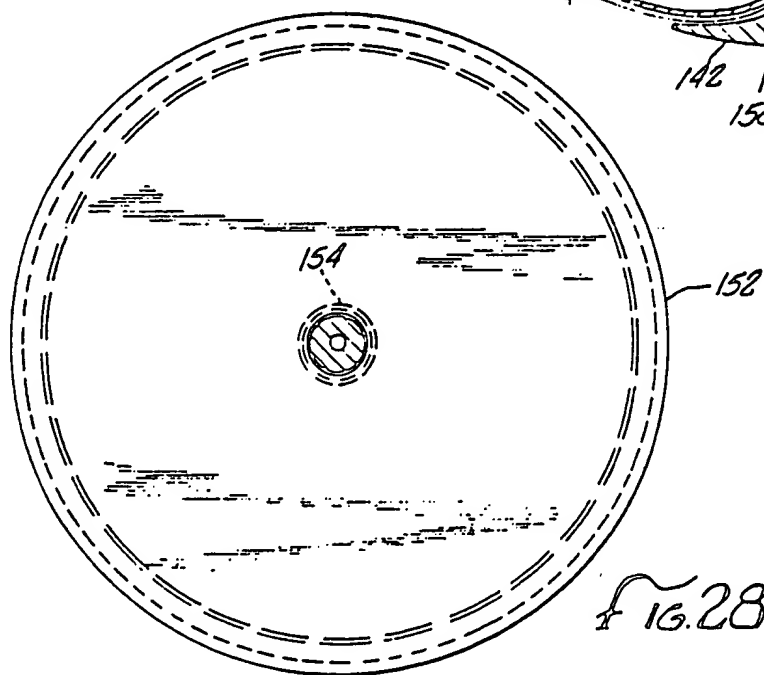
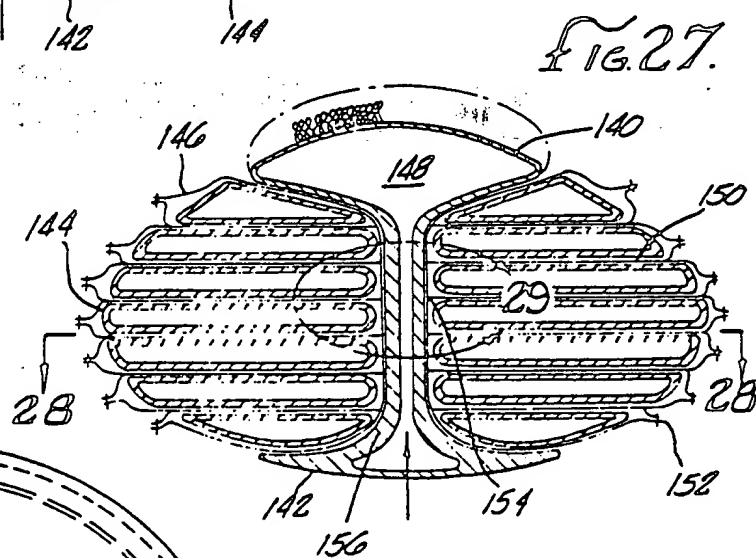
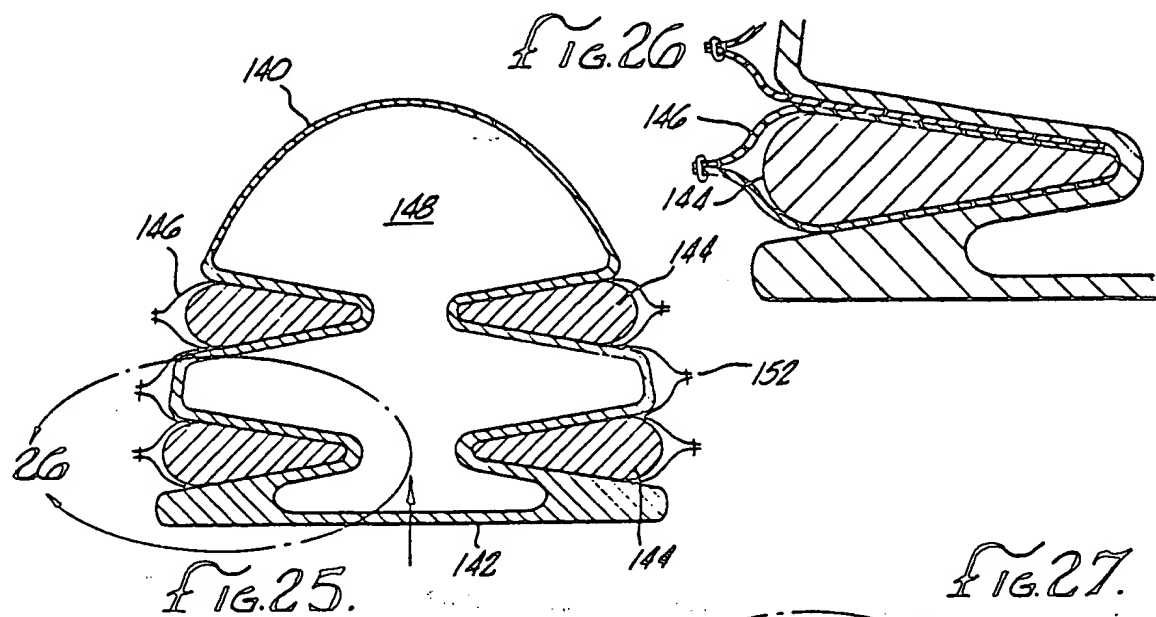


FIG. 23.

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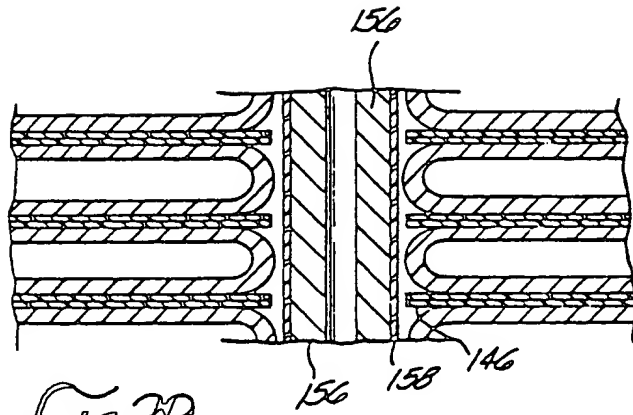


FIG. 29.

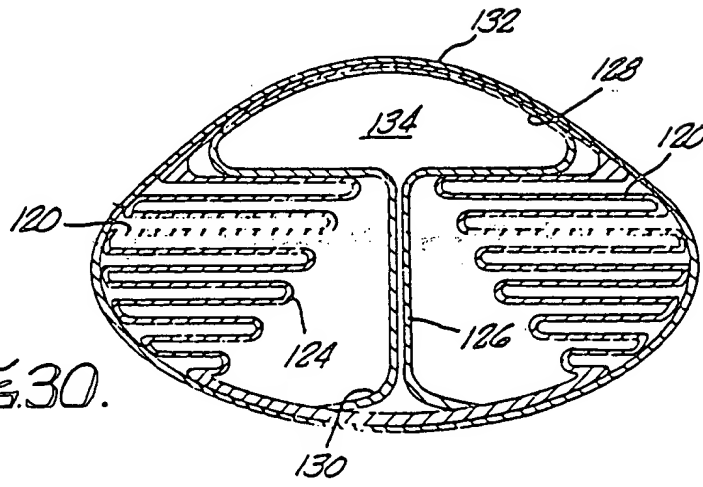


FIG. 30.

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DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			EP 88312068.5
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl. 4)
D,Y	<u>US - A - 4 648 880 (BRAUMAN)</u> * Totality * --	1,2,7- 14,22, 33,34, 40,45- 47,55- 64	A 61 L 27/00 //A 61 F 2/12
D,Y	<u>US - A - 4 531 244 (HAMAS)</u> * Totality * --	1,6, 22-30, 33-35, 40,44, 45,47- 52,61, 62	
D,A	<u>US - A - 3 293 663 (CRONIN)</u> * Totality * -----	1,6,13- 15,17- 20,22, 29,30, 33,61, 65,67	
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl. 4)
			A 61 F A 61 L
Place of search VIENNA		Date of completion of the search 30-03-1989	Examiner / SCHAFER
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS			
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	

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